Message to the Senate Transmitting the Costa Rica-United States Treaty for the Return of Stolen, Embezzled, or Appropriated Vehicles and Aircraft With Documentation

September 5, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica for the Return of Stolen, Embezzled, or Appropriated Vehicles and Aircraft, with Annexes and a related exchange of notes, signed at San Jose on July 2, 1999. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of stolen vehicle treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to eliminate the difficulties faced by owners of vehicles that have been stolen and transported across international borders. Like several in this series, this Treaty also covers aircraft. When it enters into force, this Treaty will be an effective tool to facilitate the return of U.S. vehicles and aircraft that have been stolen, embezzled, or appropriated and taken to Costa Rica.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, with Annexes and a related exchange of notes, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 5, 2000.

Remarks to the United Nations Millennium Summit in New York City

September 6, 2000

Madam President, Mr. Secretary-General, my fellow leaders, let me begin by saying it is a great honor to have this unprecedented gathering of world leaders in the United States.

We come together not just at a remarkable moment on the calendar but at the dawn of a new era in human affairs, when globalization and the revolution in information technology have brought us closer together than ever before. To an extent unimaginable just a few years ago, we reach across geographical and cultural divides. We know what is going on in each other's countries. We share experiences, triumphs, tragedies, aspirations.

Our growing interdependence includes the opportunity to explore and reap the benefits of the far frontiers of science and the increasingly interconnected economy. And as the Secretary-General just reminded us, it also includes shared responsibilities to free humanity from poverty, disease, environmental destruction, and war. That responsibility, in turn, requires us to make sure the United Nations is up for the job.

Fifty-five years ago the U.N. was formed to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Today there are more people in this room with the power to achieve that goal than have ever been gathered in one place. We find today fewer wars between nations, but more wars within them. Such internal conflicts, often driven by ethnic and religious differences, took 5 million lives in the last decade, most of them completely innocent victims.

These conflicts present us with a stark challenge: Are they part of the scourge the U.N. was established to prevent? If so, we must respect sovereignty and territorial integrity but still find a way to protect people as well as borders.

The last century taught us that there are times when the international community must take a side, not merely stand between the sides or on the sidelines. We faced such a test and met it when Mr. Milosevic tried to close the last century with a final chapter of ethnic cleansing and slaughter. We have faced such a test for 10 years in Iraq, where the U.N. has approved a fair blueprint spelling out what must be done. It is consistent with our resolutions and our values, and it must be enforced.

We face another test today in Burma, where a brave and popular leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, once again has been confined, with

her supporters in prisons and her country in distress, in defiance of repeated U.N. resolutions.

But most conflicts and disputes are not so clear-cut. Legitimate grievances and aspirations pile high on both sides. Here there is no alternative to principled compromise and giving up old grudges in order to get on with life. Right now, from the Middle East to Burundi to the Congo to South Asia, leaders are facing this kind of choice, between confrontation and compromise.

Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak are with us here today. They have promised to resolve the final differences between them this year, finally completing the Oslo process embodied in the Declaration of Principles signed 7 years ago this month at the White House.

To those who have supported the right of Israel to live in security and peace, to those who have championed the Palestinian cause these many years, let me say to all of you: They need your support now, more than ever, to take the hard risks for peace. They have the chance to do it, but like all life's chances, it is fleeting and about to pass. There is not a moment to lose.

When leaders do seize this chance for peace, we must help them. Increasingly, the United Nations has been called into situations where brave people seek reconciliation, but where the enemies of peace seek to undermine it. In East Timor, had the United Nations not engaged, the people would have lost the chance to control their future.

Today I was deeply saddened to learn of the brutal murder of the three U.N. relief workers there by the militia in West Timor, and I urge the Indonesian authorities to put a stop to these abuses.

In Sierra Leone, had the United Nations not engaged, countless children now living would be dead. But in both cases, the U.N. did not have the tools to finish the job. We must provide those tools with peacekeepers that can be rapidly deployed with the right training and equipment, missions well-defined and well-led, with the necessary civilian police.

And we must work, as well, to prevent conflict; to get more children in school; to relieve more debt in developing countries; to do more to fight malaria, tuberculosis, and AIDS, which cause a quarter of all the deaths in the world; to do more to promote prevention and to stimulate the development and affordable access to drugs and vaccines; to do more to curb the trade in items which generate money that make conflict more profitable than peace, whether diamonds in Africa or drugs in Colombia.

All these things come with a price tag. And all nations, including the United States, must pay it. These prices must be fairly apportioned, and the U.N. structure of finances must be fairly reformed so the organization can do its job. But those in my country or elsewhere, who believe we can do without the U.N. or impose our will upon it, misread history and misunderstand the future.

Let me say to all of you, this is the last opportunity I will have as President to address this General Assembly. It is the most august gathering we have ever had, because so many of you have come from so far away. If I have learned anything in these last 8 years, it is, whether we like it or not, we are growing more interdependent. We must look for more solutions in which all sides can claim a measure of victory and move away from choices in which someone is required to accept complete defeat. That will require us to develop greater sensitivity to our diverse political, cultural, and religious claims. But it will require us to develop even greater respect for our common humanity.

The leaders here assembled can rewrite human history in the new millennium. If we have learned the lessons of the past, we can leave a very different legacy for our children. But we must believe the simple things: that everywhere in every land, people in every station matter; everyone counts; everyone has a role to play; and we all do better when we help each other.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. in the General Assembly Hall at the United Nations. In his remarks, he referred to President Tarja Halonen of Finland, Co-Chair, U.N. Millennium Summit; U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in New York City

September 6, 2000

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Have you any expectations?

President Putin. Only positive expectations.

President Clinton. I agree with that. This is just part of our ongoing, regular consultation. We're going to have another chance to meet in Asia in a couple of months, and we have a lot of things to talk about. But it's part of our continuing effort to strengthen our relationships and to help our people.

[*At this point, a question was asked and answered in Russian, and no translation was provided.*]

President Clinton. Thank you. Let me just say one thing about the ABM issue. We have worked together on nuclear issues very closely for virtually the whole time I've been in office and, actually, for quite a long time before that, before I became President. The decision that I made last week on our missile defense will create an opportunity for President Putin and the next American President to reach a common position. And I hope they can, because I think it's very important for the future that we continue to work together.

When we work together, we can destroy thousands of tons of nuclear materials and lots of nuclear weapons and work together in the Balkans for peace. I mean, we can get a lot of things done if we work together. So I hope that the decision that I made will enable my successor and President Putin to resolve this issue and to continue working together on all the arms control issues.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, the deadline set by Israel and the Palestinians is a week from today. Do you have any reason to believe that there might be something worked out by this time, or would you like the parties to discard the deadline?

President Clinton. Well, I haven't met with them yet, but I think that—I think we can work through that if there's a sense of progress—and one of the things I hope I have a chance to talk to President Putin about—but I think the main thing they have to decide is whether there is going to be an agreement within what is the real calendar, which is the calendar that is ticking in the Middle East against the political realities in Israel as well as for the Palestinians. There's a limit to how long they have, and it's not very much longer.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:25 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Joint Statement: Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative Between the United States of America and Russian Federation

September 6, 2000

President William Jefferson Clinton of the United States of America and President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation met today in New York and agreed on a Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative as a constructive basis for strengthening trust between the two sides and for further development of agreed measures to enhance strategic stability and to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, missiles and missile technologies worldwide. In furtherance of this initiative, the two Presidents approved an implementation plan developed by their experts as a basis for continuing this work.

The Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative builds on the Presidents' agreement in their two previous meetings. The Joint Statement on Principles of Strategic Stability, adopted in Moscow on June 4, 2000, and the Joint Statement on Cooperation on Strategic Stability, adopted in Okinawa on July 21, 2000, establish a constructive basis for progress in further reducing nuclear weapons arsenals, preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty, and confronting new challenges to international security. The United States and Russia reaffirm their commitment to the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability. The United States and Russia intend to implement the provisions of the START I and INF Treaties, to seek early entry into